

Paine-Atkins House  
Longnook Road  
Truro  
Barnstable County  
Massachusetts

HABS No. MA-757

HABS  
MASS,  
1-TRU,  
34-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D. C. 20240

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

PAINE - ATKINS HOUSE

HABS No. MA-757

Located on the south side of Longnook Road 1/3 mile east of U.S. Highway 6 in Truro, Barnstable County, Massachusetts.

Building number 13-5 in Cape Cod National Seashore.

Owners: Heirs of A. Leellie Smith, late of  
800 West Ferry Street, Buffalo, New York

Use: Summer residence, for rental.

Date of erection: ca. 1810/15

This is an example of a traditional Cape Cod "double-house" of the early nineteenth century. It is one of the oldest houses in Longnook Hollow, Truro, and it is classified a historic structure in Cape Cod National Seashore. It stands on land initially granted to Jonathan Paine in 1710, whence the popular name "1710 House."

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

Contrary to popular opinion, this house was built in the early nineteenth century - most likely about 1810/15. The foundation for this date is the internal evidence of the house itself. First, the roof structure consists of hewn timber trusses with wide planks nailed perpendicular to the ridge. This kind of construction persisted on the Lower Cape until about 1820, which is thus the latest reasonable date of construction. The interior woodwork, by comparison with other examples, suggests a date in the early nineteenth century, i.e., after 1800. Within these two decades the style can be pinned down to about 1810/15. The mantel in the east room consists of pilasters and entablature, and there are also pilasters in the over-mantel. In general this whole composition is a simple carpenter's version of the kind of elaborate mantel in the house called "Jericho," which was presented to the town of Dennis in 1962 as a historic center. The details on the mantel in Jericho appear to be derived from plates in Asher Benjamin's Rudiments of Architecture, published in 1814. This is of course only a general clue. However, the mantel in the west room consists of pilasters supporting an entablature with reeding in the pattern of metopes, recalling plate 28 in Benjamin's American Builder's Companion, which was published in 1806. Considering then the archaic structure of the house and the general stylistic character of the woodwork, a date of ca. 1810/15 seems the most reasonable estimate for the house.

The original owner of the house is not known, although probably a member of the Paine family. The Paine connection can be established through proven nineteenth-century ownership. On the "Map of the Counties of Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket, Massachusetts" published by Henry F. Walling (New York, 1858) this house is clearly indicated J. Atkins.

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Historical Information

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In the Atlas of Barnstable County, Massachusetts (Boston, 1880) p. 76, the house is likewise clearly designated J. Atkins. According to Mrs. Ruth Dyer of Truro, who keeps a private collection of genealogical and historical manuscripts, this J. Atkins was John Atkins who was born in 1804. The historian Shebna Rich, Truro-Cape Cod (Boston, 1883), p. 226, makes the statement that "Lt. Jonathan Paine, son of Thomas Paine, Esq. the first settler, built the house now occupied by John Atkins." The same is repeated by Simeon Deyo, History of Barnstable County, Massachusetts (New York, 1890), p. 933, adding the statement that the house was built in 1710. These two accounts are the origin of the popular belief that the existing house was built in 1710 and of its name "1710 House." More importantly, these accounts establish that the existing house, occupied in the nineteenth century by John Atkins, stands on land originally granted to Lieutenant Jonathan Paine. Shebna Rich (p. 226) quotes the original document, dated May 8, 1710, by which the proprietors granted to Jonathan Paine "a bit of land to set his house." It is evident that a house was built about that time; however, Rich (p. 226) goes on to say, "The leaded windows, with small diamond-shaped glass brought from England, the broad deep fireplaces, with wide-mouthed ovens and the huge chimney stacks, have given place to modern substitutes, and other changes have left but little of the original building of 1710." Indeed the rebuilding appears to have been total and ca. 1810/15.

Lieutenant Jonathan Paine (1686-1756) is well documented in local history. In addition to the accounts cited above, he is variously mentioned by Frederick Freeman, The History of Cape Cod, Vol. II (Boston, 1862), pp. 552-559. According to Rich (p. 549), his son Jonathan Paine (b. 1711) inherited his estate and became a man of substance. The chain of ownership has not been determined from the time the younger Jonathan Paine acquired the property in 1756 until the map of 1858 establishes the ownership of John Atkins. That century includes the time when ownership passed from Paine to Atkins and the date when the existing house was built. It is possible then that the existing house was built by a younger generation of the Paine family (by a son of the younger Jonathan ?) or perhaps by John Atkins' father, who was Paul Atkins (1770-1851): see Vital Records of Truro (Boston, 1933), p. 186.

After the ownership of John Atkins, i.e., after ca. 1890, the existing house was owned in turn by a number of families - Stephens, Poole, Goodwin. It was lately owned by A. Leslie Smith, who died in 1961 or 1962, and is now presumably owned by his heirs.

The house has been little altered inside, except for the replacement of the over-mantel in the west room and the removal of the ceiling, to expose the hewn joists, in the original kitchen. The mantel in the

original kitchen has been stripped of paint; it also appears to have been re-assembled. The garret has been finished as modern bedrooms. In mid-nineteenth century an ell was added on the north, as a workroom or summer kitchen. It is now fitted out as a modern kitchen. A screened porch has been added across the south front of the house. The surrounding trees and shrubs are now so dense that it is very difficult to see the house.

A photograph of ca. 1890, owned by Miss Marion Rich of Truro, has been copied for HABS. It shows the house, from the west, in the clear setting formerly characteristic of Cape Cod. The western wall is completely exposed, showing the shingled exterior and the windows - two large and two small - in the gable. The northern ell is there, and near the house are a small shed and barn. The road passes quite near the house on the north. (Shebna Rich says that the road passed in front of the house on that site in the eighteenth century). The photograph includes a clear view of Longnook Hollow, and in the near background can be seen the Thomas Dyer House (also in HABS, and building number 13-6 in Cape Cod National Seashore).

Prepared by:

*Ernest Allen Connally*

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National Park Service  
Cape Cod Survey II  
Truro Field Office  
August, 1962

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### PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

The Paine-Atkins House is a one and a half story Cape Cod double house of wood. The rectangular house faces south with a north ell. All exterior and wall surfaces are shingled and the house is surrounded by residential lawns and planting.

The house is in excellent condition with over-all dimensions of 29' on the east by 34' on the south. The underpinnings are red brick and the walls are plank construction covered with wooden shingles on the exterior and with plaster on the interior. The frame is post and beam. The south front of the house has a modern screened-in porch. All other doors have red brick stoops. There is one center chimney of red brick.

The front door is in the center of the south side and there is a door to the east from the north ell, and one on the west face of the ell - none seem original. The windows are 9/6 light double hung on the first floor. The second floor has 6/6 light double hung sash. All windows have exterior wooden blinds. The gable roof has wood shingles, sawn timber about 5" x 8" and planks running perpendicular to the ridge. There is a simple box cornice.

The first floor has two front rooms and a large room to the rear. The first floor has a south front door and entry stair hall with main rooms on either side. To the north and rear is a large room that was once the old kitchen. This room has two small rooms on its east and evidence for two having been on its west end. The north ell contains a modern kitchen. The second floor has three modern bedrooms.

The one stair runs from the south door to the center of the second floor. The flooring is random width pine planking from 8" to 14" on the first floor. The second floor has some planks as wide as 20".

The walls and ceilings are plastered. The southeast and southwest rooms have wainscoting of painted wood. The southwest room wainscoting rises to form the window stool and has a three panel over one panel pattern. The wainscoting is natural wood as are the mantel and the exposed ceiling joists in the old kitchen. The interior doors are all six panel painted wood with iron lift latches.

Lighting is modern electric lamps. The house has central heat. The fireplaces in the old kitchen, and the southeast and southwest rooms are open.

The modern road passes to the north of the house. There is a modern asphalt drive to the east of the house which connects the road to a small garage-barn to the northeast of the house.

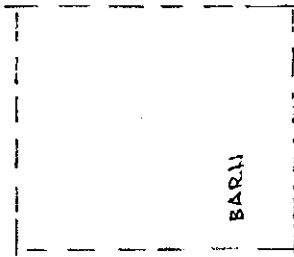
Prepared by:

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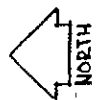
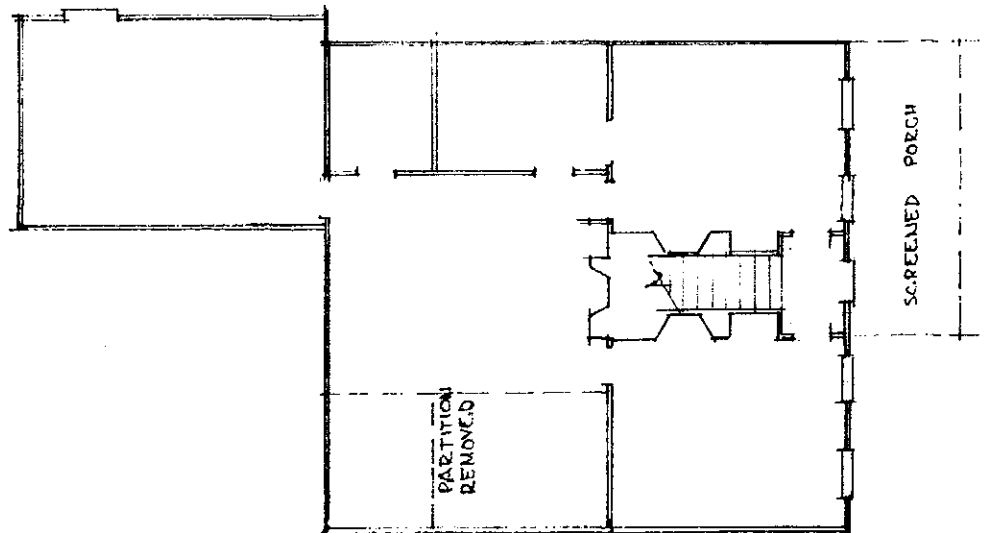
Donald B. Myer  
National Park Service  
Cape Cod Survey II  
Truro field office  
July 26, 1962

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LANGLISH ROAD



FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
NO SCALE